

Love to God and Man inseparable.

A
S E R M O N

PREACHED BEFORE

A *respectable Ancient and Honourable Society*

OF

FREE AND ACCEPTED

M A S O N S,

On the 27th Day of December, 1764;

(Being the Feast of St. JOHN the Evangelist)

At St. JOHN'S Chapel BIRMINGHAM:

And publish'd at the Request of the *Brotherhood*.

By the REV. THO. DAVENPORT.

*Honour all Men.—Love the Brotherhood.—Fear
God.—Honour the King. 1 Peter ii. 17.*

TO WHICH IS ADDED

A CHARGE delivered at the Constitution
of the Lodge N^o 130, at the Swan in *Wolverhampton*,
on Tuesday the 30th of October, 1764.

By the Right Worshipful GRAND MASTER, *pro tempore*.

SECOND EDITION.

BIRMINGHAM:

Printed for the Author, by J. Sketchley; and sold by
Mr. Johnson near the Monument, and Mr. Briffow
St. Pauls Church Yard, London; and by all other
Booksellers in Town and Country. MDCCLXV.

(Price SIX PENCE)

Love to God and Man inseparable.

SEYMOUR

REACHED BEFORE

A religious, ancient and honorable Society

FREE AND ACCEPTED

M. A. N. S.



On the 17th of November, 1764,
(being the Feast of St. John the Baptist)

At St. John's Chapel, Birmingham:

And published at the Request of the Brethren.

By the Rev. THO. DAVENPORT.

Historical Memoir of the Brethren of the
Society of Free and Accepted Masons.

TO WHICH IS ADDED

A CHARGE delivered at the Constitution
of the Lodge No. 130, at London in Westminster,
on Tuesday the 30th of October, 1764.

By the Right Worshipful GRAND MASTER, THE BRETHREN.

SECOND EDITION

BIRMINGHAM.

Printed for the Author, by M. Smith, and sold by
Mr. Jackson near the Monument, and Mr. Wilson,
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Booksellers in Town and Country.

(Price 2s. 6d.)



P R E F A C E.

S O remote were the Author's Thoughts and Intentions from printing the following plain Discourse, that even the very Day before it was deliver'd from the Pulpit, it was much doubted whether an Opportunity wou'd be obtain'd for that purpose.—One Motive with the Author to consent to an Impression was to the end a particular Prejudice relating to his Doctrine might be thereby remov'd.

The Reader will be the less surpriz'd to find the following Pages so superficial and unlabour'd, when he is told they were only the Work of a few Hours; and a Diffidence, at the same Time, whether any Use wou'd be made of them.

More wou'd have been said upon the Subject of MASONRY, had the Author been an older and more experienced Workman:—for to do Honour to the Craft, will always make a Part of that Man's Ambition, who is desirous to walk worthy of the Vocation wherewith he is called; and duly considers, that a just Brother and true is a Friend to Religion, and a Servant of G O D.

What is said of Religious Profession in general, may be said of MASONRY in particular.—It is

no uncommon Thing to see the stately Form of Godliness seperated from its Power :--and tho' the Royal Craft wou'd furnish the Mind with much useful Knowledge, as well as divine and awful Contemplation, many can be content to sit down with a few outward Signs and Tokens ; and, forgetful of their most strict and rational Obligations, exhibit a Conversation diametrically opposite to a noble Institution, calculated for the present Good and future Interest of Mankind.

*To every Person therefore, into whose Hands this familiar Discourse may fall,---whether a Fellow of the noble Craft, or, under a more extensive Comprehension, a Fellow-Member of Christ's visible Church, I wou'd recommend and enforce this important Lesson laid down by the inspired Apostle, "DO ALL TO
" THE GLORY OF GOD."*

This is the way to arise from Nature to Grace, and thro' Grace to Glory;---to regain in the second Adam what we lost in the first;---to become † a Building fitly framed together, growing unto an holy Temple in the Lord, and to be an Habitation of God, thro' the Spirit; and is evidently the one great End of our Calling and Profession in TIME, and the only Ground of Assurance that we shall reign with Christ in ETERNITY.

† Ephes. ii. 21. 22.

E R R A T A. In Page 9, Line 27, after Testimony, read, of the Gospel.—In Page 3 of the CHARGE, Line 13, for Word read World.



P R A Y E R.

BLESSED Lord! who rulest all Things by thy mighty Power, and in thine infinite Wisdom didst create Them to thy Glory; Grant that all thy People, in every Station and Degree of Life, may act in Conformity to thy prescribed Laws, and never vary from that unerring *Rule* laid down in thy revealed Word. Give Grace, O heavenly Father, to every Member of thy Church;---that they may not only profess themselves Followers of thy Son Jesus, but that their Works may make manifest their Faith, and that the Honour may be ascribed to Thee the great *Jehovah*, who fillest Heaven and Earth with thy divine and awful Presence.

Particularly, O Lord, let us implore thy Blessing upon this Congregation, and especially upon the combined Members of the *Fraternity* here assembled before thee: Bless all their lawful Undertakings, crown them with Success in their several Employments, adorn them with Virtue and Innocency of Life, with Piety towards Thee, and
true

true Love and Benevolence towards one-another.
 —*Finally*, we bless thy holy Name for every Instance of thy unmerited Bounty to us, humbly beseeching Thee, that after a Life spent here in strong Confidence, and chearful Obedience, we may all meet to join the blessed Society of Saints and Angels above, where Christ our Head sitteth at the Right-hand of thy Majesty on high, and in whose Name and Words we close our Petitions, saying

Our Father, &c.



Love to God and Man inseparable.

S E R M O N.

I J O H N IV. 20.

If any Man say, I love God, and hateth his Brother, he is a Lyar; for he that loveth not his Brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?



M O S T distinguishing Evidence to prove our Love to the Divine Being is this which my Text produces;—and it is so expressly and emphatically laid down, and brought to the Level of every Capacity, that no single Person can possibly err, either in the Judgment he passes upon himself in this Respect, or of the Heart and Disposition of his Fellow-Creature.—“*If any Man say, I love God, and hateth his Brother, he is a Lyar; for he that loveth not his Brother whom he hath seen how can he love God whom he hath not seen?*”—And in the following Verse the Apostle adds,—“*This Commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God, love his Brother also.*”

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From

From this Part of Scripture read, which, as well as all others, *was written for our Instruction*, and given by the Inspiration of the Holy Spirit,—I shall take Occasion to shew,

First, The cogent Obligations we lie under to love God.

Secondly, That we cannot possibly love God, except we love our Brother also. “*If any Man say, I love God, and hateth his Brother, he is a Lyar.*”

Thirdly, After pointing out some of the distinguishing Marks and Evidences of Love, I shall conclude with an Application suited to the Design of our present Assembling. *

First then, let us enquire into those cogent Obligations we all lie under of loving God. And here we need not carry our Views any farther than Self-Love, because all our Happiness, whether temporal or spiritual, is derived from this inexhaustible Fountain.

I. If we look to this Life only,—who is it that gives us Life, and Breath and all Things?—Whose Earth do we inhabit?—Whose Air do we breathe?—Who gives us Food to nourish our Bodies

* The two former Heads I chose rather to enlarge upon, in order to make the Discourse more general in its Use, as the last is more peculiarly adapted to the Fraternity of Free Masons.

Bodies, and Raiment to preserve them from piercing Cold?—To whom are we indebted for Health, and a Capacity of enjoying the minutest Blessing?

—*This (says the wise Man) is the Gift of God.*

—And indeed without Health, and a Power of Enjoyment, what would all his other Gifts avail us?

—The human Soul is of a Nature so extensive and capacious that all temporal Enjoyments put together cannot satisfy it.—Wealth, Honour, Titles and Distinctions, with every conceivable degree of Luxury are not sufficient to answer the Demands and fill the Capacity of this divine Part of Man; possessed of all these, he would still acknowledge, with the restless and invidious *Haman*,
—*All this availeth me nothing.*

You would imagine, indeed, upon taking an earnest View of the vigorous Pursuits of Mankind, that all the Happiness of Soul and Body lay in the Things of Time:—But, upon serious Reflection, it most evidently appears, this is owing to a vitiated Judgment, and proceeds only from carnal Notions and false Reasoning.—It is *GOD* alone that can fill the Desires of the Soul,—especially the Soul that sees its real Wants;—for something is *always* wanting;—and that *SOMETHING* is never to be found in the Creature, but in the Creator. Hence we may infer, that every temporal Gift, however useful to the Body, however needful for our well-being here, if not sanctified to us by Love and Thanksgiving, will prove, not only a present Snare, but a future Curse.

II. If we see Cause to love God for Things

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temporal

temporal, to whom shall we look for those beyond the Grave?—Alas, What is Man amidst the vast Creation! “Less than the Dust of the Balance, or a Drop of the Bucket.”—Or rather let us ask with the Psalmist, *Lord, what is Man, that thou so regardest him?*—’Tis true God created him a noble Creature; endowed him with a Divine Faculty called REASON, a *Will* that ran in a parallel Line with the Will of his Creator, and a Power to obey, without Error or Default, the wise and just Commands of his supreme Governour.—But how ignoble has he made himself!—No sooner were the accursed seeds of Sin implanted in the human Heart, than his primitive Glory departed, the divine Image was defaced from his Soul,—his *Reason* debauched, his *Will* corrupted, his *Understanding* obscured, and his *Strength* enfeebled:—And had not Man been, through mere *Grace* alone, an Object of *Mercy*, he must have remained forever, what he is still by *Nature*, a just Object of eternal *Wrath*.—Herein the Love of God most abundantly appears, that *while we were Sinners, Children of Wrath, and Heirs of Death, Christ died for the Ungodly.*—† *Greater Love hath no mere Man than this, that a Man lay down his Life for his Friend:* But HE, a God incarnate, died, not for a *Friend*, a *Brother*, or his *Country*,—but for *us* his avowed *Enemies*.—God sent his *only-begotten Son*, that he might * *redeem us from the Curse of the Law being made a Curse for us.*—Drawn by the Cords of LOVE, he left the Bosom of his Father; and

† John xv. 13.

* Gal. iii. 13.

and commiserating the deplorable State of fallen Man, he took up a human, tho' sinless Body:— In his *active* Obedience he fulfilled the divine Law, and made it honourable; and in his *passive* Obedience he suffered the Penalty for Sin,— *that God might be declared just, and the Sinner justified that believeth in JESUS, Rom. iii. 26.* When it was impossible for Man to help himself, or for the † *Blood of Bulls and Goats*, or any of the legal Sacrifices to take away Sin,—then said the SECOND PERSON, *Lo, I come, to do thy Will O God.*

Herein is LOVE;—and here lies the Power of the OBLIGATION, that † *we love him, because he first loved us.*—And this leads us to our next consideration,

SECONDLY, That we cannot love God, and, at the same time, hate our Brother.

The Apostle, in the Words of my Text, gives you a Reason, appealing, as it were, to your senses;—“ *he that loveth not his Brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?*”

Through our present Dependance upon Sense, may be discovered how much greater Difficulty is implied in loving the invisible God, than Men, with whom we daily and familiarly converse.— And so comprehensive are these two Duties of loving God, and our Brother, that they are the Spring and Substance of all Duty.

Hence

† Heb. x. 4. 10.

† 1 John iv. 19.

1. *Second* LOVE is called *the fulfilling of the Law*. — *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, Mind, Soul, and Strength, and thy Neighbour as thyself*: How false and absurd, therefore, must that Man's pretences to true Piety and Religion be, who thinks he is obedient to the Commands of the *first* Table, whilst he neglects the Duties of the *second*; seeing that both ought to be conjoined, as being both required by the same Authority. — But,

2. It may be asked, who, or what I am to understand here by the Term or Appellation *BROTHER*? — I am not to confine it to him that is born of the same Parents, nor to a *Fellow-Member* of any particular Society in which I may happen to be engaged; — nor am I to bound it within the Limits of my Fellow-Citizens, or those of my own Country or Nation, — much less to any Sect or Party: — No, the Relation is far more extensive, — stretching itself, like the Benevolence of our one God and common Father, even to the Ends of the Earth; — but more especially to every true Member of that Catholick Church whereof Christ is the Head. To these our Love and Benevolence should flow like a perpetual Stream: For as in the human Body, if one Member suffers, the rest suffer with it; — so in the Body of Christ's visible Church, a like Sympathy must shew itself in the Parts and in the whole. — This the Holy Ghost has commanded by the Mouth of the Apostle, — *"While we have time let us do good unto all Men, and specially unto them that are of the Household of Faith."*

'Tis

'Tis true, particular Relations lay us under particular Bonds;—Relative Duties demand a strict Obedience: Nature itself seems to link us with a Chain of in-dwelling Affection to our Kindred according to the Flesh.—But GRACE SUPERIOR spreads and diffuses the divine quality; and makes it shine with a Lustre transcending as far the Power of Nature, as the greater LIGHT that rules the Day surpasses the cold and pale Luminaries of the Night.

3. As Members of particular Societies, we are bound to COMPASSION, HARMONY, and LOVE.—

Bodies and Societies shou'd never be Establish'd, but agreeably to the Will of God, and as tending some way or other more immediately to his Glory.—Now, if I love God so as to desire to glorify him in my *Actions*, my *Time*, my *Words*, and my *Property*,—it is not possible that I shou'd withhold any of These from my *Fellow-Members*, so far as their Need requires; and the sacred Ties of my Obligation demand, without making Shipwreck of a good Conscience respecting the Engagement I have enter'd into, through a Profession of that Love to God, and of SQUARING MY ACTIONS by the STANDARD of TRUTH towards *all Men with whom I have to do*.

—Of Consequence then, in vain do we pretend a Regard to the Supreme Being, if we do not manifest it by a dear and tender Regard to our Fellow-Creature:—For by this, in Conjunction with other Christian Graces, are we justified before Men in a declarative Sense; and in which sense

sense it is applied by St. *James* when he says,—
 “ *Ye see then, how that a Man is justified by Works,*
 “ *and not by Faith only.*”

—A farther Proof that a Love to God cannot be separated from a Love to our Brother, arises from his being the *GREAT ARCHITECT*, Common Father, Governour, Ruler and Protector of All.--- It has pleased him, indeed, in his all-wise and unerring Providence, to make a difference in his Dispensations, respecting the Things of this World: But if you make the Possessor of such Gifts the only Object of your Good-will,—you lose Sight of the great and bountiful Benefactor, whose *SUN shines with equal Brightness on the Peasant and on the Monarch*;—and whilst you look to the *Creature* more than the *Creator*, and withhold that universal Respect, equally due to those that *abound* and those that *suffer need*, you only manifest a self and abject Love.

III. Let us now point out a few of the distinguishing Marks of that sincere Love which God and Man require of us, and then speak more particularly to the present Occasion.

The first great Evidence of our Love to God is an inward and heart-felt Gratitude and Thankfulness for his Bounties temporal and spiritual.—Sensible of the Divine Goodness towards you, you will be possessed of that Poverty of Spirit, and Humility of Mind, which becomes one dependent on his Providence for the Supply of your Wants, and for the Influences of his Holy Spirit to enable
 you,

you, not only to live the Life, but *die the Death of the Righteous.*—

No sooner do you discover your own Weakness and Inability;—that all your Labour, Toil and Care would be fruitless and ineffectual without the divine Concurrence, but you will look up, with a grateful Eye, to the Fountain whence all Comforts flow.—In the midst of Plenty you will be abased; and, struck with a Sense of your own Unworthiness, will never repine at the scanty Lot.—These momentous Considerations will prompt you to impart your utmost Aid to the Indigent, to break your Bread to the hungry Soul; looking only upon yourself as an Instrument in the Hand of God, and praising him for every opportunity afforded you of doing good.

BOUNTY is commended by *all*,—practis'd by few. CHARITY is much spoken of,—little understood. St. Paul asserts, 1 Cor. xiii. 3. that we may give all our Goods to feed the Poor, and our Bodies to be burned, and yet want it.—

* The Word, in the Original, signifies *Love*. It wou'd be the same thing therefore if he had said, “ Though I bestow all my effects upon the Poor, “ and leave myself nothing;—tho’ I deliver myself a voluntary Sacrifice to die at the stake for “ the Testimony;—yet if I have not a Root and “ Principle of Love to God in my Heart, which “ carries me out to these Actions and Sufferings,

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“ they

* Ἀγάπη

“ they will profit me nothing with Respect to my
“ eternal Salvation.”

But influenced by this *true Charity* or *Love*, which the Apostle here sets forth as the distinguishing Characteristic of a Christian, you will neither be rash in your Expression of Wrath, nor hasty to revenge;—you will envy none, but be *clothed with Humility*;—you will have an Eye to your Neighbour's Interest as well as to your own; you will mourn for his Faults, and rejoice in his Virtues; and whilst you believe all good Reports of your Brother, you will endeavour to stifle and suppress the *bad* ones:— In a Word, you will endure Injuries with that Patience which becomes a good and pious Man, having a convincing Evidence of this Truth—**THAT LOVE COVERETH ALL SINS.** PROV. x, 12.

These are a few distinguishing Marks which I proposed to point out; and shall now address myself, by an application as brief as the Occasion will permit, to those of the Fraternity here assembled.

For. If the Glory of God and the Good of Mankind be (as it ever ought to be) the true Object of any laudable Institution, how zealously shou'd every Member of this our *Royal CRAFT* direct his Eye to that great and important End!— And here I am led to remark, upon looking to the early Days of MASONRY, that it has been highly favoured and presided over in all Ages by the wisest and best of Men.—Witness many of our
Antediluvian

Antediluvian Brethren; and particularly that *Grand Architect* NOAH, who was so miraculously preserved to be the Father of a second Generation. Add to these the many succeeding *GRAND MASTERS*, whose exemplary Lives and eminent Characters are so gloriously delineated in the sacred Pages of divine Truth.

That the EYE OF PROVIDENCE was ever over this select Body cannot be doubted by the wise and good. We have not only the Traditions of Men to guide our Judgment, but a written Testimony from the sacred Oracles, that it has subsisted from Time immemorial.

'Tis true, Satan always had, still hath, and doubtless will have his Agents and Instruments to retard, deface, and demolish the LORD'S WORK:-- Nay, we know (--tis painful to think of it!--) our "*Foes may even be those of our own Household.*"-- But nevertheless, so strong is the Arm, and so piercing the Wisdom of our Great Master-builder and Superintendent of all Things, that to this Day the Gates of Hell have never been able to prevail.

To answer all those Objections frequently brought against the Royal Art, wou'd be needless; because no Man can form a significant Objection against *that* to which he is an utter Stranger: All must be confused Supposition and dark Chimaera. -- One or Two I cannot, however, overlook.

The first is,---"*What Right have any Body of*

B 2

"Men

“Men to impose upon a person an Obligation to keep as a Secret that of which he has no previous certain Idea?”—Upon the like Plan of reasoning, † some have been so daring to ask,—“What Right has a Parent to impose upon a Child an Obligation to perform a Baptismal Covenant, when as the Child, so far from forming any just Idea of the Covenant, is totally void of all rational Ideas.”—Now, as every rational Agreement I enter into must necessarily demand an Obligation on my Part to perform it;—and as the Utility or Advantage I expect to reap from the Covenant itself must either go hand-in-hand with, or be subsequent to the Performance;—how is it possible that I should obtain the one, without performing the other? As soon might you expect an Harvest without Seed-time; or Light without the Rays of the Sun.

A second trite Objection is this.—“Why shou’d any Thing serviceable to Mankind be hid from the World in general?”—Hence an abrupt Conclusion is immediately and inconsiderately drawn, *There must be something bad in it.*—Rash Determination! to Judge and Condemn without Enquiry. But to answer in few Words:

We wish no man who is *worthy*, and capable of making a proper use of the *Light*, to continue in

† Such as oppose Infant Baptism I wou’d refer to the many weighty Arguments extant, of which it would be vain in me to attempt an Improvement.—I only take the Liberty to introduce a Case similar, and not altogether impertinent to that before us.

in darknels;—nor do we attempt to keep any Thing Secret that may be useful to the World. —But we remember a Divine Precept, laid down by the Great *Founder* of his Church,—“*Cast not your Pearls before Swine, lest they trample them under their Feet, and turn again and rent you.*” And as a farther Caution to those, whom he appointed to raise a *Superstructure* on the *Foundation* he had laid, he adds, “*Be ye wise as Serpents, harmless as Doves.*”

But as no wise Man will pretend to judge of Colours in the Dark,—I shall no longer dwell upon the misguided Scruples of others; but address myself more particularly to the BRETHREN.

You very well remember (for I trust I am speaking to my Fellow-Heirs of Hope in Christ) how that our Lord's Enemies and Opposers reviled him upon Earth, particularly in calumniating his great Wisdom and Power, by a blasphemous Assertion that “*That he cast out Devils through Beelzebub the Prince of Devils.*” Our blessed Master refutes this slanderous Charge by an Argument drawn from an Impossibility; and in a manner too, becoming the Wisdom of a God incarnate;—“*If an House be divided against itself, that House cannot stand.*” Mark iii. 25.

From this undeniable Argument, supported by common Experience, we may draw a most useful and instructive Lesson:—Should we ever be so unhappy as to be divided amongst ourselves, how can
our

our TEMPLE stand?—What avails the WISDOM of the Contriver,—the STRENGTH of your PILLARS,—the BEAUTY and HARMONY of your ORDER,—if LOVE unfeigned be not the Cement to bind the Materials together?

2. It may probably be asked of us, “What is that extraordinary *Light* we pretend to enjoy “above other Men?”—We should leave no Room for such an Interrogation, were we strictly to regard that one important Rule, “Let your LIGHT “*so shine before Men that they may see your good “Works, and glorify your Father which is in Hea- “ven.”*

This would be the best, and indeed the only true Method to silence every Objection to the CRAFT, and add a more splendid Lustre to the FABRICK, than a Covering of the GOLD or OPHIR.

Look upon and investigate the noble Implements of your Profession.—Every sepearte Utenfil in the Lodge, will afford you a most solemn and copious Lecture of Improvement.—Act upon the SQUARE, not only with a Brother, but with every Man:—For however lawfully you may have been constituted a MASON, an *honest* Brother and *true* can only distinguish and prove you by this Token, viz. when he sees and understands that you “do “*Justice, love Mercy, and walk humbly with your “God.”*—Rest not contented with the outward Ceremony

Ceremony of the noble Craft; but gain the Substance.—A *Plan or Draught* is one Thing;—the real *Edifice* is another:—Many can *design*, few take the Pains to *execute*.—How amiable a Structure would the Christian Church be, had we not only *The Form of Godliness*, but *the power also*!

In the the next place, it may not be improper to remind you, how wary and cautious you ought to be whom you admit as Members of this Society.

Antient and Honourable are Epithets held in great Esteem amongst Men.—The former (it's Antiquity) stands secure; but the latter can only be supported by our own Care and Vigilance.—Every corrupt Member you admit, *is a Part* from the venerable Escutcheon, and scatters disgrace thro' the whole Body.

And herein I would recommend the utmost Care, and strictest Scrutiny. Do not calmly rest in the Opinion of a single Brother that reports a Candidate; but explore the Temper and Disposition of his Mind, as well as his public Character; and be morally sensible he comes *dutifully prepared*.

And whereas it is certain, that *MASONRY* in itself, admits of no Distinctions in particular Seats or Parties;—yet, in a Lodge of *Christians*, no profane Deistical Person,—no one that does not cordially embrace the Faith of Christ, ought ever

to

to be received.—I need not give my Reasons;—
you are able to apply them.

There never was a Time when our Fences
needed more strictly to be guarded.—If when In-
iquity began to spread itself over the Face of the
Earth, true Piety was preserved amongst our an-
cient Brethren; shall we shut the Door of our
Hearts,—and refuse an Asylum to a Guest that is,
alas! too great a Stranger?

At this Day, we find that Monster Sin tri-
umphantly bearing up it's many Heads, under the
prevailing Sanction Custom, as if defended by a
Law: But the more we see the Kingdom of Satan
prevail; with so much the more Vigilance should
we watch the Motion of the Enemy, and add the
greater Strength to the Fortifications of Truth.

And now, in the last Place, my dear Brethren!
let us, with Humility of Heart, and Serenity of
Temper, bear in mind whose Work we are to
carry on,—and under whose Protection we trust to
be supported.

Let us (as it is one particular Part of our Con-
stitution, as well as our bounden Duty) be loyal
to our Sovereign, and obedient to his Magistracy.
—Look upon the BADGES and EMBLEMS with
which you are invested and adorned, in their true
and extensive Light,—and of which we can never
be ashamed, so long as Truth, Integrity, Virtue,
and

and *Religion*, find an Harbour in our Breasts, tho' a World of Darknes shou'd rise up against us.

And to sum up all; let it be remembred that the Time of a solemn Reckoning is near at hand, when we must all give up our Accompts, and every Man shall receive his *Wages*, “ according to “ *his Work done in the Body, whether it be good, or “ whether it be evil.*—If we are found to be true Followers of Christ our Head;—if we now become fit *Temples* for the Habitation of the Spirit of God;—we shall shortly be releas'd from our Toil and Labour here, and translated to a *Building not made with Hands*,—not subject to Decay, but *eternal in the Heavens*,

F I N I S.



and Religion, and an Harbinger in our Breasts, tho' a World of Darkness should rise up against us.

And to turn up all; let it be remembered that the Time of a solemn Reckoning is near at hand, when we must all give up our Accounts, and every Man shall receive his Wages, according to what he has done in the Body; whether it be good, or whether it be evil. If we are found to be true Followers of Christ, we shall be released from our Toil and Labour here, and translated to a Building not made with Hands—not subject to Decay, but eternal in the Heavens.

F I N I S



A
C H A R G E

DELIVERED AT THE

CONSTITUTION

OF THE

North Free

L O D G E, N^o CXXX.

AT THE

SWAN in WOLVERHAMPTON,

On Tuesday the 30th of October 1764.

By the *Right Worshipful* GRAND MASTER,
P R O T E M P O R E.



B I R M I N G H A M:
Printed by *James Sketchley*, in the *High-street*.

MDCCLXV.

CHARGE

DECEMBER 1792

CONSTITUTION

OF THE

LORDS OF THE GREAT SEAL

IN

HAMPTON



ON THE 17th OF DECEMBER 1792

By the Right Honourable GRAND MASTER

PRO TEMPORE



BIRMINGHAM

Printed by James Smith in the High Street

MDCCLXXV



T H E
C H A R G E.

B R E T H R E N!

BEING honour'd with a Trust of such high Importance, as that of being appointed to preside over the Transaction of this Day; I think myself in some measure bound, before I close the Business of it, to enlarge upon the most material Principles of our *Fraternity*,—as it may appear to me consistent with the nature of my Office, and the solemn Cause of our Meeting.

Being persuaded I am speaking to Men already acquainted with the *Origin, Nature, and End* of our Institution, as well as the excellent Rules handed down to us, by those Ornaments of the *Craft*, Who in all ages of the World have distinguish'd themselves by their Zeal for the *Royal Art*;—Rules, which preserve an universal Knowledge of, and Regard for, the *faithful Brother*,
of

of what Nation or Language he may be, or what Mode of Religion he may profess; provided he constantly maintains that true Catholic Doctrine, of *doing Justice, loving Mercy, and walking humbly with his God*:---Rules, which regulate our Conduct by such principles, as render *F R E E - M A S O N R Y* Honourable, and ourselves useful Members of Society;—and without the Observance of some such like Ordinances as these, no Man can discharge the Duty he owes to God, his Neighbour, and himself; for in these Rules consist the material Points of the *Moral Law*.---Being persuaded (I say) that you are in some Measure acquainted with these Things,—it wou'd be Presumption in me to go about to inform you; —I wou'd only remind you of what relates more particularly to the Business before us: And in doing this, I presume it will be no way disagreeable if I touch, briefly on the several Heads before mentioned. And

I. *First*, of the *Origin* of the Institution of *F R E E - M A S O N R Y*.

And herein, both History and Tradition have fix'd many Periods of Time, as well as many Causes of it's Institution.

Some will have Masonry to subsist from *Adam* and his Sons.—That *Seth* was an Architect appears from the Pillars of Brick and Stone he erected, whereon to carve his *Astronomical* Observations; whereby Times and Seasons, by the Revolutions of the Heavenly Bodies, might be accounted for.

for. And these built he of Force more than equal to the impending Storm, which he, doubtless foresaw wou'd soon lay waste the World, for the Sins of them that dwelt therein.

Much is said of *Tubal-Cain*, the first Artificer in Brass and Iron : But on him we cannot found the Origin of the Craft with more Propriety than it is fix'd on many others of equal Fame for their peculiar Inventions.

On *Noah*, and the great Fabric of the *Ark*, built by God's appointment, to preserve the *few faithful* of all the *Antediluvians*, is by many rested the Rise of the *Fraternity*.----Others, with more Propriety, begin where the stupendous Work of *Babel* was terminated by a *Confusion of Tongues*; which render'd *Signs* absolutely necessary to supply the Place of Words, when no Man cou'd understand the Language of his former Friend.——Some *particular Signs*, amongst the many then in Use, might be, and undoubtedly were, establish'd; whereby they might be known to each other, shou'd *they* meet again, in any Part of the World, *who* had before been in *Shinar*:---These being handed down to their Children,—the most wise and prudent of them wou'd, of Course, take Care to preserve *them*; well knowing the universal Advantages which wou'd necessarily accrue from a League of *Amity, Benevolence, and Brotherly Love*.

And to confirm this Opinion, we need only remark how the Babylonish Empire (founded in the
Plains

Plains of *Shinar*, where *Babel* stood, by *Nimrod* the Grandson of *Noah*) flourish'd for many Ages; and how the Monarchs of the *Medes* and *Persians* gave the World Laws: In fine, how all the Eastern Emperors arriv'd to, and supported their extensive Power over the many Kingdoms and Provinces in their respective Dominions,—were it not by a Cement far more binding than the modern Treaties of European Princes;—a *Cement* it must be, which, like the fundamental Laws of our *Fraternity*, must remove that aspiring, ambitious Pride and Envy, which divides Empires and Kingdoms, as well as Families and Friends.

But in all ages of the World, we find a Record of unruly Members in every State; grasping at Power to which their Virtues or Abilities were by no means equal, and which too often overthrew the Constitution they attempted to defend. Their own Weakness became the more expos'd, in proportion as their Station in Life render'd them more conspicuous; and their Power usually terminated in Ignominy and Disgrace.

This Observation affords a moral Lesson to Members of private Societies, as well as Kingdoms and States; and is particularly applicable to the Business of this Day; For as much as *You*, who are but now forming yourselves into a Body, shou'd each of you cultivate an humble Diffidence of his own Abilities in his own Breast:—It will render you happy as private Members of *this*, or any other Society; And shou'd the favourable Opinion of your Brethren raise you above your Fellows in Office.

Office, this will cause you to discharge it with a Modesty and Affability becoming every Man in Power.

But to return from this Digression.—It is now universally agreed amongst *Masons*, that at whatever Period of Time this Society was first instituted,—the Means of distinguishing each other, and the peculiar Laws and Ordinances of the *Craft* now in Being, were established at the Building of that inspired Work, the *TEMPLE* of our Grand Master *Solomon*.—

The *Craft* was carried thence into *Tyre* and *Egypt* by those *Tyrian* Workmen, whom *Hiram* their King had sent to assist the Son of *David*, in raising that stupendous Pile:—Whence it was transplanted into *Europe* by that great Mason and Philosopher *Pythagoras*; and after having been honour'd with the Patronage of the greatest in Power, and the most celebrated in Literature, in almost all Nations in the World, for many Ages,—we are happy, this day, in professing ourselves Members of it, in such a respectable Figure as it so deservedly makes in *England*.

To preserve its Dignity is the Business of all its Members;—and to do this, it shou'd be our Study to act consistent with the *Nature* and *End* of it;—which is the next Thing I wou'd consider.

Free Masonry, with Respect to Religion, is founded on those Principles as from indubitable Authority we find subsisted before the Ignorance

or Artifice of Men introduc'd Doctrines into the World, repugnant to the revealed Laws of God, and their own unprejudiced Reason.—For a *Mason* is oblig'd by the *fundamental Principles* of his *Profession* firmly to believe in One Eternal and Adorable God, the Maker of all Things, and Judge of all Men;—and to *Square* his Conduct by those sacred Precepts deliver'd to us, by his servants the *Prophets* and *Fathers*, for our Instruction and Comfort.—And so faithfully is he bound, by his *Tenure*, to observe this *Rule* of Conduct, that a *good Craftsman* cannot tread in the Paths of *Libertinism* or *Atheism*, nor be stain'd with the gross Bigotism of blind *Superstition*: But may embrace what particular Mode of Worship he shall in his own Conscience most approve, provided it be no way repugnant to that reverential and spiritual Service his Creator requires.—In Honour and Honesty he is to deal by the World,—ever observing that golden Rule of *doing to all as he wou'd they shou'd do unto him*.

And instead of ent'ring into idle and unnecessary Disputes, concerning the different Opinions and Persuasions of Men, the Members of our *Fraternity* have ever agreed in all Ages thereof,—That good and worthy Men, of every Persuasion, might be admitted into our *Mystery*.—This has been a Means to reconcile Differences amongst Persons, who, without this Assistance, might have spent their whole Lives in a State of Variance.

Nor is this Association in the least dangerous to our particular Constitution.—In the *Lodge* no
Prophanes

Prophaness is admitted,—no Blasphemy, Lewdness or Swearing heard,—no evil Plotting entertain'd,—no Controversy about Religion or Politics suffer'd.—And tho' *some are of Paul, and others of Apollo's*; yet, in these Principles of our Profession, we all agree, that every Man shou'd labour justly; nor eat any Man's Bread for nought; but, to the utmost of our Capacity, to love and serve each other, as *Brethren* of the same *Household*, and *Fellow-heirs* of the same *Hope*;—wisely reflecting that it wou'd be as absurd to quarrel with another because he will not *believe* as *he* does, as it wou'd be in him to be angry with another because he is not of the same Complexion and Stature.—

Hence it is, that, setting aside every Prejudice of Opinions,—we are taught,—nay constrain'd to Succour the Unfortunate in their Distress;—to divide our Bread with the industrious Poor,—and to put the misguided Traveller into his Way:—In short, to discharge all the relative and social Duties, as Qualifications inseparable from a *good Mason*, and suitable to the *Nature* and *End* of the Institution, which every faithful Craftsman will not fail to support.

The *Masons* have ever made *Faith to the Government*, under which they liv'd, a ruling Principle; and on all Occasions have behav'd with a Loyalty which has procur'd them Protection.—And tho' its first Institution was (undoubtedly) confin'd to *Operative Masons*, or Masters of Work;—yet, its Advantages being soon found, was propagated amongst all Professions and Estates of Men, even

in its early Days: And no greater Proof of its Utility and Excellency can be propos'd, than its Extensiveness, both with respect to the Time of its having subsisted, and the number of its Members of all Nations and Languages; and those the most eminent for their Virtue and Learning, respecting the Times in which they liv'd.——

Had it not been an excellent Institution indeed, it must have been long since abolish'd, thro' the Revolutions of States, or the Caprice of Mankind, —who are too fond of Novelty to adhere long, even to the *best* Measures, thro' a vain Opinion of their own Sufficiency.

When one Man advances a new Scheme, a Fondness for Variety soon engages many Profelytes, however absurd in itself the Doctrine may be.——*Seneca* justly observes, that it fares with us in human Life, as with a routed Army:—One stumbles first, and others fall upon him, 'till the whole Field becomes one Heap of Confusion.

But this *Fraternity*, blessed be God! affords an Exception: For after *having subsisted from Time Immemorial*, and stood the bitterest Shocks it cou'd sustain from undeserved Foes,—it is still preserv'd the same nursery of moral and social Virtues; and from whence arise BROTHERLY LOVE, RELIEF, and FIDELITY unfeigned.

To preserve its Dignity,—and to cement *Harmony*

mony on its proper Basis *Love* and *Charity*;---It shall be my next Business to remind you of the most material Rules laid down for our Conduct, both within and out of the *Lodge*: And this in a more particular manner I wou'd direct to *You*, whom we are met this Day to constitute into a Body.

The Word *Lodge* comprehends the whole organiz'd Body of *Free-Masons*, in like Manner as the Word *Church* is expressive of all *Members* thereof, as well as the *Place of Worship*.---But here I wou'd confine the Sense of the Word to the particular Places constituted for our assembling together, after the manner of the *Craft* in all Ages:---To preserve *Order* and *Harmony* herein and to instruct the Members in the Mysteries of the Art, is the Business of the *Master* and presiding *Officers*.---On *your* Conduct chiefly depends the welfare of the *Lodge*.---And as your Body is now in its *Infancy*, it requires the greater Care to establish its Reputation in the Place where 'tis constituted.

A diligent attendance on the Business of the Fraternity will be highly conducive to its Prosperity;---as, on the contrary, an Absence in the Officers of the *Lodge* will naturally beget a like Neglect in the Members.

A particular Regard must be paid to the establish'd Regulations publish'd by Authority, until you can adapt private Laws that may be suitable to the particular Circumstances of your *Lodge*,---
always

always preserving, with *Care*, the ANCIENT LANDMARKS.

To the *Grand Lodge* be careful to pay the accustomed Acknowledgments;—and recount your most material Transactions as often as Occasion and Opportunity offers.

Exercise the Power wherewith you are now invested, at all Times, with Gentleness; and reprove a Transgressor with *brotherly kindness*, and in *Love*: This will give your Admonition its due Force, and make you respected even by those you chastise.

Let every private Member pay a due Respect to the Master and Officers; and shou'd any Inadvertency appear in *them*, let it be construed with Brotherly Candour; always remembering that *You* yourselves are frail. Such favourable Allowances will cement your Society beyond the Power of Ill-nature to destroy.

Your Conduct out of the Lodge shou'd be regulated by the *Square* with all Men;—keeping yourselves (if possible) upon a *Level* with the Good and Virtuous;—and whilst you walk uprightly, by the *Plumb*, with every Person,—you will be inevitably respected by even the Enemies of our *Craft*, and remove the Prejudices and false Conceptions of unthinking Men.

Having thus reminded you of the Duty of Officers, it remains that I shou'd urge your Care in the Choice of them;—this being of such importance

importance to the Prosperity of your *Lodge*, that you cannot be too cautious herein.—The Charge of each particular Office you have already heard from the respective Grand officers, whose Assistance I am honour'd with in this Solemnity; which leaves it only for me to observe,—that no Man ought to be put in Nomination, but such as, by his known *Ability* and *Merit*, is deem'd capable of discharging well his important Trust.—He shou'd have long Experience and Knowledge in the Mysteries of the *Craft*,—and be well skill'd in the public and private *Rules* and *Orders* of it.—His Morality and Honesty shou'd be unquestionable:—In his Nature, humane,—in his Conversation modest;—of sound Judgment, unbiass'd by Passion or Interest;—in *Friendship*, *sincere*, and in *Secrecy*, *faithful*.—Such a One will do Honour to the *Lodge*;—and to such shou'd the Members be obedient in their demeanor, and Support in the due Discharge of his Office;—and on the other hand, ever reject the *Over-bearing*, *Contentious*, *Impatient*, *Presumptuous* and *Conceited Prattlers*, the Bane of all civil Society.

And here let me recommend to your Regard a Caution of material Import and which has ever been too little attended to, until fatal Experience has render'd the Error known.---The Circumstance I am speaking of is the advancing Men into Office whose slender Knowledge in *Masonry* renders them unable to discharge their Trust, with Credit to themselves or their Lodge, notwithstanding their Intentions may have been very good, and their Character in Life worthy the Dignity of their

their Office:—Many good Lodges have suffer'd by such a Choice, and which, I trust, from this Caution, you'll be careful to avoid.

To what I have already advanc'd as essential to your Prosperity,—there remains another important Caution, and to which you must constantly attend with the utmost Care; for in this, not only the Happiness and Reputation of your Lodge, but the Credit of the whole Fraternity is concern'd; and that is, *The Institution of Members*.

Regard the Morals of the Candidate more than his Fortune; tho' the latter shou'd be such as wou'd not disgrace you to associate with:—But the former shou'd be unexceptionable; and the Countenance of such a Man wou'd be a Credit to the *Fraternity*.

'Tis needless to enforce this, by observing how many have been initiated into our Mystery, who had not Capacities to comprehend them.

Others, by falling into Scenes of Drunkenness and Debauchery, have neglected their Occupations, and injur'd, if not ruin'd their Families. This reflects an Odium and Disgrace upon the whole Body of *Free-Masons*, amongst those who neither know nor consider, that our Constitutions and Principles are diametrically opposite to such profligate Proceedings.

In the last Place, be careful that no *Pretenders* to the *Craft* (shou'd any such attempt it) ever gain Admission

Admission into your *Lodge*; and be cautious of the least Word, which may concern the Mystery, before Strangers.—Enter not into Quarrels and Disputes with those, who thro' Ignorance or Prejudice may speak evil of, or ridicule it.—Be always benevolent according to your Ability: When a worthy Brother is oppress'd with Sickness or Poverty, listen with attention to his Affliction, let Pity flow from your Breast, and relieve, without Prejudice, as you find you have Power.

In a Word, Cultivate that *Love* and *Union* amongst yourselves, which will break forth and shine in all the social Offices of true *Friendship* and *Brotherly kindness*; for “*Love is the fulfilling of the Law.*”——And may *the God of Love and Truth* enlighten you in the true Knowledge of the sacred Mysteries, and guide you continually in the due Observance of his most holy Laws;—that thro' his Grace ye may obtain an Eternal Residence in the *LODGE* above, and glorify the Great *I A M*, in the Perfection of Holiness.

F I N I S.